

Meeting Minutes for the Citizens' Commission on Elected Officials Compensation
April 30, 2015 at 4:00 p.m.
Columbus City Hall, Conference Room 225

Attendance:

- Chester C. Christie, Commission Chair
- Kristen Easterday, Commissioner
- Dawn Tyler Lee, Commissioner
- Marchelle E. Moore, Esq., Commissioner
- William Murdock, Commissioner
- Andrea Blevins, Columbus City Clerk
- Josh Cox, Chief Counsel, Columbus City Attorney Richard C. Pfeiffer, Jr.
- Ken Paul, Chief of Staff to Council President Andrew J. Ginther
- Rory McGuinness, Special Assistant to Mayor Michael B. Coleman
- Nichole Brandon, Director, Columbus Department of Human Resources
- Greg Beaverson, Compensation Manager, Columbus Department of Human Resources
- Amy DeLong, Director, Civil Service Commission

Mr. Christie called the fourth meeting of the Commission to order.

Approval of the Minutes: Ms. Moore requested that Mr. Josh Cox and Ms. Jaquilla Bass be reflected as absent in the minutes. Ms. Easterday requested that 'were' be added to the second page, first paragraph, last line after the word "considerations".

Mr. Murdock made a motion, seconded by Ms. Tyler Lee, for adoption of the Minutes for the April 8th Meeting as amended.

- Yeas – 5
- Nays – 0
- Motion carried

The Commission held a conference call with the City of Phoenix about their experience with having a compensation commission and lessons that could be learned during the process.

Dr. Bill LaFayette gave a presentation on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and the path of price changes over time. Dr. LaFayette recommended that the Commission use the CPI-U, Midwest, Size Class A, All Items for their formula and recommendations.

Mr. Murdock asked if this particular CPI was in potential danger of going away or changing. Dr. LaFayette responded that this CPI went back decades and if were to happen, there would be plenty of warning from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Mr. Cox gave an opinion on Section 15 of the Charter, which references salaries not being increased or diminished during the term for which the individuals are elected or appointed. Mr. Cox stated a formula is permissible, based on previous case law, as long as it is set prior to the commencement of the term. Mr. Cox gave the opinion that the previous four years prior referenced in the Charter refers to the date of the annual increase.

Mr. Murdock asked if the four years was a ceiling for what could be recommended. Mr. Cox responded affirmatively. Ms. Moore asked if they were to accept the recommended CPI, would the cap of the increase be 1.99%. Mr. Paul responded affirmatively. Ms. Moore asked if the Commission selected the recommended CPI, the cap of the salaries would be 1.99% no matter what. Mr. Paul responded that the charge of the Charter is to set the base rate for each elected official, along with the increase past the base rate which is what is capped at the four year average of the CPI.

Ms. Moore asked for the language of Section 15-4 in the City Charter to be read aloud. Ms. Tyler Lee read the language.

Mr. Murdock clarified that the Commission was not only recommending base salaries but also the rate of increase. Mr. Paul responded affirmatively.

Mr. Beaverson gave an update on the response rate of survey and stated that the survey was now closed for results. Mr. Paul added that in addition to the responses, public information was gathered to fill in for gaps in information.

Mr. Christie asked if there was an initial analysis after receiving all the information. Mr. Beaverson responded that they had just begun looking at the data. Mr. Christie asked where the Commission should focus. Mr. Beaverson responded that it would be good to look at the base pay. Mr. Christie replied that the Commission will look at the data and become familiarized with it before drawing any conclusions.

Mr. Cox gave an opinion on the deadline of the recommendations of the Commission. Mr. Cox stated the context of this deadline should be taken into consideration because all elected officers' terms begin on January 1 so salaries for those officials have to be set effective prior to the end of the year prior to the term starting, meaning the Council may not need the report as early as April. Mr. Cox added that the report is for the benefit of Council, and the Charter outlines in Section 15-4 that it is Council's decision and may enforce this Section by compelling a meeting of the Commission for the report.

Mr. Murdock made a motion, seconded by Ms. Easterday, to give staff instruction with using the CPI-U, Midwest, Size Class A, All Items for their presentation.

- Yeas – 5
- Nays – 0
- Motion carried

The Commission confirmed the public hearing for Wednesday, May 6th at 10:00 a.m. and tentatively scheduled the next public hearing and working meeting for Tuesday, May 19th at 5:00 p.m.

Mr. Christie adjourned the meeting.